Downsizing of Government

2694. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a draft approach paper prepared in connection with the Tenth Five Year Plan has recommended drastic downsizing of Government establishment in order to trimdown the bloated bureaucracy;

(b) if so, the details of the suggestions made;

(c) the Government's response thereto; and

(d) by when a decision is likely to be taken to implement the recommendations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS AND PUBLIC GRIEVANCES OF THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) to (d) In the course of the mid-term appraisal of the Ninth Five Year Plan and formulation of the Approach Paper for the Tenth Five Year Plan, Planning Commission has made certain suggestions regarding reforms in governance practices and downsizing with a view to reshaping the bureaucracy and improving its effectiveness in discharging its functions. The Draft Approach Paper to the Tenth Five Year Plan is yet to be approved by the National Development Council. It is, however, seen that the suggestions with respect to downsizing referred to above include identification of surplus staff, setting up an effective re-deployment plan and a liberal system for exit. There is also reference to control on recruitment to various vacant posts of secretarial and clerical nature etc.

The Central Government has taken steps in the recent past with a view to rightsize the government manpower. In 1992, the Government had decided to reduce the number of posts at various levels by 10% and, as a result, nearly 1.83 lakh posts have been abolished. An Expenditure Reforms Commission has been set up, *inter alia*, to review the road map for reducing the functions, activities and administrative structure of the Central Government. The Commission has submitted seven Reports so far and these reports have been forwarded to the concerned Ministries/Departments for implementation. In pursuance of the Finance Minister's announcement in his Budget Speech in the Parliament on 28 February, 2001 regarding limiting the fresh recruitment, the Department of Personnel and Training have issued instructions in May, 2001 requesting all the Ministries/Departments of the Government of India to restrict the recruitment to one-third of the direct recruitment vacancies occurring in each year subject to further ceiling that this does not exceed 1% of the total sanctioned strength of Ministries/Departments. The Ministries/Departments have accordingly been advised to prepare the Annual Direct Recruitment Plans, starting with the anticipated vacancies in the current financial year.